

***Njingkook*: A Corollary of Tradition, Entertainment and Education among The *Mupun* People Of Plateau State**

Dakwom Makpring Longgul
Department of Theatre and Film Arts,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Jos, Jos, Nigeria
Email: dlonggul@unijos.edu.ng
ORCID: <http://orchid.org/0009-0007-4100-0145>

Abstract

Njingkook is a tradition of storytelling performance among the *Mupun* people of Plateau State, Central Nigeria. The tradition of storytelling is a universal phenomenon and like many African communities, the *Mupun* people had explored storytelling as a means of entertainment and education becoming a tradition and a cultural practice over time and space. The main idea here is that storytelling entertains and educates the communities long before contact with technology of the outside world. Adopting the Dramatic Dialogue (DD) theory with a qualitative methodology, the study examines the education components and its process using one of the popular folktales *TalkuulDaboo*, within the prism of some discursive frames i.e. Process by which discovery, recognition and understanding occur to the co-players or participants of a theatrical performance like *Njingkook*. The study details paradox, make-believe, imitation, improvisation and domestication as discursive frames responsible as quality assurance tools for teaching and learning within the *Njingkook* theatre experience. The study concludes that *Njingkook* theatre therefore preserves the voice and codes of the *Mupun* moral system, epistemology, and communal philosophy. Again, history is preserved, collective struggle is encouraged while a people's belief is transmitted to the young generation.

Keywords: *Njingkook* storytelling, tradition, *Mupun* education

Introduction

Storytelling is universal and is as ancient as humankind. Before writing, there was storytelling. It occurs in every culture and at every age. It exists to entertain, inform, and to promulgate cultural traditions and values. Oral storytelling is telling a story through voice and gestures. The oral tradition can take many forms, including epic poems, chants, rhymes, songs, and more. Not all these stories are historically accurate or even true. They encompass myths, legends, fables, religion, prayers, proverbs, and instructions. The essence is to make people productive members of the community. This paper is interested in the age long tradition of the *Mupun* people of Plateau State, central Nigeria. *Njingkook* is a traditional moonlight storytelling performance activity shared among the Mupun natives based on a long age tradition and worldviews. It means folktale or storytelling, carried out after the day's activity is over. *Njingkook* performance is central to the life of every *Mupun* person as it marks the beginning of communal education, hence, the paper attempts to x-ray the process of teaching and learning in this traditional communal entertainment and education system.

A Brief Culture-History of the *Mupun* People

According to Miri about one thousand African people (Nigeria the most populous black country in Africa) with a population estimated at 120,000,000 can boast of 450 ethnic groups” among which are the *Mupun* a minority tribe found in Pankshin and Mangu LGA of Plateau State (368). Accordingly, oral tradition has it that, *Mupun* as a term is composed of two phrases: *MU*, meaning “we” and “*PUN*” ‘chase out of hiding. It is a term used by hunters when a game is chased out of its hiding place. A tradition of the Mupun occupying the *Jiblik* community has it that during their wars with the *Mwaghavul* people, a neighboring ethnic group the later discovered the hiding place of the former -laying ambush, “*Mu*

Pun Mu”! the Mupun people echoed. This play indicated that they had discovered the *Mwaghavul* people's hiding place and intended to flush them out (Danfulani and Fwatshak 6).

The term *MU-PUN* could also denote in Mupun grammatical construction mean “the thing of the father” or “that which belongs to the father.” Geographically, the *Mupun* people are found in the eastern edge of the Jos Plateau which is approximately located in the Centre of Nigeria. The *Mupun*, like many other ethnic groups on the eastern part of Jos Plateau, speak Chadic languages and are mutually intelligible. Chadic speaking neighbours of the *Mupun* include the *Ngas*, *Mwagavul*, *ChakfemTambes*, *Gung*, *Miship*, *Ron*, *Kofyar*, *Doemak*, *Mernyang*, *Jipal* and a host of others. These groups trace their ancestry to the Middle East, and then to some areas of Lake Chad Basin, down to the southern parts claimed by the ancient *Kanem-Borno* Empire. The implication of the Chadic relationship of *Mupun* and the others in the group cannot be underestimated as it is fraternal hence, might share the same features. Politically, with the creation of Pankshin province in 1926, the *Mupun* area became known first as a Lankan village and about 1922 and later as a Lankan district in 1934 according to Danfulani and Fwatshak (7).

Settlements were clan based. A household comprised a man, his wife/wives and children and their families. The household is called *Ngu lu* while the clan head is called *Pup lu*. The household is the smallest unit of Political, Social and Judicial organization. The larger unit is the village head. Most villages derived their names from geographical features around the community for instance the *Asa community drives* from *Saak* –Stone traces on farms, *Asa* is on a sloped terrain, which provides erosion control through terracing. *Abwor* village derives from *Bwor*, dust. *Jing* village from *Jing*- red loamy soil. *Kagu* from *GU*, cactus, which suggests the heavy use of cactus. In terms of world

view, the *Mupun* world view is divided into two:

- a. *Yill-grum*- meaning human world inhabited by man, animals and plants.
- b. *Yill-Nji*- the world of the ancestors consisting Na'an (God)

The *Kum* institutions (embodiment of the deities), *Riin*-Spirits and *Nji*- (the living Dead). Danfulani postulates that “the supreme deities, ancestors and spirits exist to assist the *Mupun* man live a useful life on earth for the benefit of his clan, extended family, and for himself as an individual to aid him incarnate into the world of the living dead” (133)

The *Kum* institution in *Mupun* worldview is second only to *Na'an* who is the Supreme Being. The wills of the ancestors were sought for through *Paa* meaning “divination” and *yen* meaning “medicines” The *Kum* had both personal and clan deities. *Kum* regulates and controls the socio-political, economic and cultural life of the *Mupun*. God is approached directly only in times of crises which is beyond human remedy and that of the deities and ancestors. At the beginning of the cultivation season called the *biyang-mar* or *Kop* the chiefpriest performs the ritual to announce the farming season. Crops in *Mupun* land include: *Kas*(millet) *khisuk* (acha, or hungry rice), *Pa'at* (olive) *Shuwabulu* (maize) *Kwaklik* (local beans), *Kom* (groundnuts) and *Dangal* (sweet potatoes) however recently, other crops like rice, potatoes, and a variety of beans is grown.

Theoretical Implication/Insight

Dramatic Dialogue (DD), is the speech of actors in drama as they interact, relate and engage one another in a story. It comes in the form of verbal words, signs, symbols and motifs which one actor passes to another and others in the course of the story. Apart from the dramatic action which can be independent of dialogue and still be able to convey the intended message, dialogue is

essential as a point of reference of an actor's actions in dramatic relationships. Dialogue enables inquiry into, and understanding of, the sorts of processes that fragment and interfere with real communication between individuals, nations and even different parts of the same organization. Dialogue is a communication tool that allows people to understand other viewpoints without pitting themselves against different perspectives. In dialogue, there is no defending of opinions, and no counterpoints. According to Wagner, “hearts and minds too often close when we do not understand words and concepts or, understand them from a limited perspective, thus the imperative for dialogue” (14).

Plato (437 - 347 BC), introduced the systematic use of dialogue as an independent literary form. In his earliest experiment with the genre in the *Laches*, he wrote on the Platonic dialogue and postulated that dialogue had its foundations in the mime, which the Sicilian poets Sophron and Epicharmus had cultivated half a century earlier. These works, admired and imitated by Plato, have not survived, but scholars imagine them as little plays, usually presented with only two performers. Today, this form of dialogue is used in classrooms, community centers, corporations, federal agencies, and other settings to enable people, usually in small groups, to share their perspectives and experiences about difficult issues. It is used to help people resolve long-standing conflicts and to build deeper understanding of contentious issues. Dialogue is not about judging, weighing, or making decisions, but about understanding and learning. Dialogue dispels stereotypes, builds trust, and enables people to be open to perspectives that are very different from their own. Dialogue is, however, a delicate process. Many obstacles inhibit dialogue and favour more confrontational communication forms such as discussions and debates. Common obstacles including fear, the display or exercise of power, mistrust, external influences, distractions, and poor communication conditions can all prevent dialogue from emerging.

The Brazilian educationalist, Paulo Freire (known for developing popular education), advanced dialogue as a type of pedagogy. He held that, “dialogue communication allowed students and teachers to learn from one another in an environment characterized by respect and equality. Dialogue, is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world (8). A great advocate for oppressed peoples, Freire was concerned with praxis - action that is informed and linked to people's values. Dialogue pedagogy was not only about deepening understanding; it was also about making positive changes in the world: to make it better. Education through Dialogue requires and generates trust rather than broadcast views of the teacher, policies, values and positions.

In application, as characters dialogue in the performance space is also extended to the audience who are co-participants in the process hence, learning takes place as both the characters in the play carry the audience to the world of the story. For learning to take place the participant undergoes certain dramatic frames through which effective learning in *Njingkook* theatre takes place, we will refer to the process as 'taxonomy of learning in action' borrowing from education and pedagogical studies. Through dramatic dialogue indices such as: paradox, make-believe, liminality, improvisation, and domestication, we consider the performance below and try to connect our the sense in our theoretical insight and discourse

NJINGKOOK AS PERFORMED:

Title: *Tal Kuul Daboo (Daboo and The Garden Egg)*

Performer: My story, my story is about Daboo (Njingkook, *Njingkook feny a daboo*)

Response: Say it, let it come and go (*saat mun duun fwa khi ni ji saet.*)

Performer: One day in the morning, Daboo's mother sent him to pluck a garden egg in the farm and bring it to cook soup. He did as instruct by his mother but on his way back, he met an old man (Dikaam). The old man deceived him and collected the garden egg and ate it all, this prompted Daboo to start crying; *eh eh eh eh eh*.

Performer: why are you crying? (Sang)

Daboo: (Sang) am crying for my garden egg,
The garden egg I plucked from my garden.
But the *Dikam* collected and ate all.

Performer: The old man had pity on Daboo and gave him a piece of broken pot and then they departed with the old man. Daboo walking a short distance, he used the broken pot to kill a bird. Shortly after killing the bird, he met an old woman immediately. The old woman (*Ninkaam*) saw Daboo with a dead bird in his hand and she played a trick on him and collected the bird, roasted it and ate it all. Daboo was troubled, no garden egg, no piece of broken pot and no bird. he then started crying and when the old woman realized that he was crying, she was cold and then asked him why he was crying.

Daboo (answered sang) I am crying for my bird, my bird.
My bird that I killed with a piece of broken pot.
an old woman collected and ate.
An old woman collected my broken piece of pot.
My broken piece of pot I collected from an old man.
An old man collected my garden egg.
My garden egg I plucked from my garden.
The old man collected and ate.

Performer: When the old woman saw that it was beyond her power, she then gave her walking stick in place of the bird to Daboo. So Daboo collected the walking stick and went ahead and on his way going, he met herdsmen taking care of their flock and they were without sticks. The herdsmen deceived him and collected the stick from him. Immediately, a thought came to him about the things he collected free of charge. No garden egg, no piece of broken pot, no bird and so all these things collected from him made him cry seriously.

Daboo: (cried bitterly); *eh eh eh eh eh.*

Performer: The shepherd now gave him a female cow in place of the stick and this was what he told them while crying:

Daboo: Am crying for stick, my stick.
My stick I collected from an old woman.
The old woman collected my bird.
My bird I killed.
I killed with a piece of broken pot.
But an old woman collected and ate.
A piece of broken pot I collected from an old man.
Old man collected my garden egg.
My garden egg I plucked from my garden.
And an old man collected and ate.

Performer: After Daboo left the shepherds, he went ahead and met a group of people gathering and performing marriage rites. The people were thinking of where they could get an animal to kill for the occasion but to no avail. As a result, they requested Daboo to give them his female cow for them to use for the marriage rites. Daboo gave it to them quietly and they slaughtered

the cow and cut it into pieces and gave it to their in-laws. Daboo was troubled and started crying and he shouted and started groaning; eh eh eh eh eh. And those performing the rites asked him why are you crying Daboo?

Daboo: Am crying for my female cow.
My female cow I collected from a shepherd.
And those performing marriage rites collected and ate.
The shepherd collected my stick.
My stick that I collected from an old woman.
The old woman collected my bird.
My bird that I killed.
I killed with a piece of broken pot.
But an old woman collected and ate.
Piece of broken pot I collected from an old man.
The old man collected my garden egg
My garden egg I plucked from my garden.
But an old man collected and ate.

Performer: The people performing the marriage rites were disturbed and so they gave Daboo a flute. They taught him how to blow the flute and how to sing different kinds of songs using the flute. Some of these people performing the marriage rites packed their belongings and followed *Daboo* while he played the flute at the reception ground to his house *Daboo's* house was far from where the wedding rites took place and it would possibly take him two rivers for him to pass before getting to his house. At the first river, there was a boy fetching water with no one to help him carry the pot of water on his head and so he shouted aloud and asks

Who is blowing the flute?
Come and help me carry my water.

Come and help me carry water.
And those with Daboo answered saying.
Did you kill a female cow?
Come and carry water for what?

They were in the front while Daboo followed them behind and as Daboo continued blowing his flute, all those who were in front went down to the river and then the boy who was fetching water gave them, he told them that they would find the river full of water and therefore they will help them to cross the river. Therefore, they collected and walked straight to their houses. Daboo continued blowing his flute and the boy fetching water from the river continued calling.

Boy: Who are those blowing the flute?
Come and help me carry water!
Come and help me carry water.

Daboo answered saying:
Who is that who always stays in the river?
Who is that shouting?

Water for what?
Do men stay in the river?
In time past, do men stay in the river with flute?
Be fast my boy.
Be fast my boy.

The boy fetching water came closer to *Daboo* and then *Daboo* helped the boy to carry the pot of water on his head. The boy appreciated *Daboo* for helping him and then gave him dove eggs which would help him cross the river if the water overflowed. Those who were on the journey with *Daboo* reached the river side and found out that the river overflowed to the brim, and

they could not cross. As *Daboo* arrived he met them pondering on what to do and the place was getting darker, and his friends tried all they could with the egg of bang let but it did not help them and so *Daboo* told them that he had dove egg which he collected from the boy fetching water. He immediately carried the dove egg in his pocket and threw it inside the river and the river that was overflowing stopped immediately and then *Daboo* took the lead. He continued blowing his flute and his friends put it in the middle as if he were a king and as they approached *Daboo's* house, his relatives heard the flute and the songs and came out running to see the surprising thing approaching their house. The relatives of *Daboo* came out of the house and saw somebody being surrounded in the middle and the person continued blowing the flute as he came closer and as he arrived in the front of the house then stopped blowing the flute.

His relations lifted their eyes and realized it was *Daboo* who left home for days and this brought them joy and they all joined *Daboo* and his entourage in dancing. Immediately, *Daboo's* relations looked for an animal and slaughtered and cooked it and they also cooked plenty food for people to eat for the safe return of *Daboo* and people came from different places to welcome *Daboo* whom they thought was dead, the whole community continue to dance.



Plate I shows the settings of *Njingkook* theatre in performance.

Plate 1 shows a traditional setting of the performance, which is today referred to as classroom. A space for communal learning. In this space learning takes place without blackboard, marker or chalk but through dialogue. The dialogue is between characters in the story and between the storyteller and the audience. The language of the performance is *Mupun*. With the picture above in mind, how can we account for the process of learning within the theatre of *Njingkook*? With our theoretical underpinning as discussed above, we shall try to examine the discursive frames as mentioned above.

Discursive Frames of *Njingkook*

By 'discursive frame' we mean the process by which discovery, recognition and understanding occur to the co-players or participants of a theatrical performance (Chinyowa 19). Gadamer noted, "It seems to me that the characteristic of human

play is that it plays something" (96). Even with playing a game or a sport, each requires not only a space specially marked off for play, but also confronts the players with certain tasks and risks. The freedom to play cannot be enjoyed without transforming the players' attitudes, purposes and behaviors to suit the tasks and risks involved in the game or sport. The ordering and shaping of play become a way of making 'something' come into being, this is what the French Social Theorist Michel Foucault called a "discursive formation" (38). The *Njingkook* theatre therefore can be analyzed through these discursive frames as ways of creating kinds of knowledge concerning the reality of the community as a codified system of entertainment and education.

Discursive frame in this sense is when such performance is inhibited, manipulated or falsified, its purpose as a public forum for addressing and redressing people's problems, concerns and desires, being an experience that transforms the person experiencing the performance; "it turns out to be the thing, or better still, a structuring element in the process of communicating development" (Chinyowa 21). As Bretherton explains, the performance fulfills the need to gain say or unsay the world, to imagine and speak it otherwise, to build the milieu of social existence. What are these discursive frames of *Njingkook* theatre? And how do these frames affect learning and development? Constituting blocks of assessing quality assurance of *Njingkook* as a tradition that entertains and educates. Summarily the scheme looks like this:

Paradox

Adam and Blatner point out that the aesthetic lies in being able to manipulate seemingly irreconcilable opposites, thereby creating a paradox, "a condition in which something is both real and not real at the same time" (11). By creating two contradictions the quest to unravel the web is heightened and passion helps in learning. Citing O'Connor in Chenoa, he asserts that the gap between the performer self and the real self, between the fictional

and the real contexts, “resides the endless opportunities for reflection about who and what we are as human beings” (43). The fictional context allows reality to be suspended, yet stays very, very close as the power of the performance resonates between the two contexts. Thus, the performance has a discursive significance that resonates beyond the frames in which it operates. The simultaneous existence of two disparate modes of existence enables learning to take place as play transforms lived experience during the paradoxical framing process. In the performance as discussed above, through the instruments of dramatic dialogue first, between the performer and the audience, and between characters in a fictional world. The audience are in the real or physical space, the performer calls the shot of a 'fictional reality' when he says:

Performer: my story, my story is about *Daboo*
(Njingkook, *Njinkook fen ya daboo*)

Response: say it, let it come and go (*saat mun duun fwa khi ni ji saet.*)

The call and response open up the line for the discourse about dramatic dialogue, however, the paradox in the same lines suggests that the spectators know that is a lie –“(saat mun duun fwa khi ni ji saet” translated as (say it so your lies can come and go..). fundamentally, the performer takes the audience to the world of the story, that is a “fictional reality”. The aesthetics of appreciation at this level is simply and squarely a revelation of the unknown, the passion to want to explore the two worlds. At this stage of paradox, the audience is carried from the simple stage which constitutes knowledge and comprehension of the fictional reality placed before him/her. The prerequisite for understanding seems to lie in giving the self over to the 'happening' but without losing it completely. In performing the story as performed above, one is caught up in the world of *Daboo*, the main character. The spectator wonders why the community in the story continues to

collect from the character *Daboo* till the end where the main character was welcomed with a dance to mark his kingship and generosity that the spectator begins to realize the paradox of the web. The story can be regarded as a 'truthful lie' because it is both real and imaginative. The duality is indeed a paradox that enhances a participant's drive to unravel the mystery of the web thereby encouraging active and participatory learning.

Make-Believe

Closely related to paradox in the cognitive domain is make-believe. We earlier identified that knowledge and comprehension shall constitute the building within the frame of paradox because one is placed within the space 'known and the unknown' however in 'make-believe' is when the situation presented carries the 'subjunctive 'as if' or 'what if' it therefore reaches a stage of trying an 'application' the spectator will like to apply experiences in the world of the story to his/her existing situation hence the spectator begins to create the make-believe signs by attempting to apply the contradictions in the first stage. Human beings constantly manufacture mental variants on the situations they face in life. Either consciously or unconsciously, they manufacture their subjunctive 'as if' or 'what if' worlds to represent potential sources of insight into how they can organize and categorize their perceptions of the world.

Steinsholt and Trandahl find a close link between paradox and make-believe. Both involve slipping outside of ordinary reality and being in the power of play (201). The players turn their attention onto something other than themselves. They distance themselves in order to find themselves again. In other words, make-believe, like paradox, also requires that participants allow themselves to be played by the play. If their suspension of disbelief is total, they may ultimately attain the state of 'make-belief'. From a discursive point of view, therefore, it is the 'make-belief'

dimension of 'make-believe' that sets the latter apart from other forms of fictional representation. Boal calls it "image of reality" and "reality of the image" The fantastic world of make-believe therefore occupies an indeterminate world that is neither entirely 'real', nor entirely 'unreal'. Thus, fantasy or make-believe plays with the ambiguities of ordinary reality to reveal that which cannot be but is. It reveals what a people can be by extending the limits of their epistemological and ontological frames of reference.

As a discursive frame, therefore, make-believe enables the participants to transcend the ordinary world as they enter the world of 'make-belief'. With reference to the *Daboo's* story above, the participants at a time takes in to the image of the world of the story which is paradoxical because of the contradictions which the spectator tries uncover, reflecting the imaginary world of the story, the participant when fix into the world of the characters in the story creates a make-believe reality around the performance that will take both character and the spectator into a mutual understanding of the codes, as the spectator becomes comfortable and appreciates the contradicting codes in the stages preceding make-believe and takes the spectator to the liminal stage

Liminality

The idea of being derived from limen meaning threshold or margin, a term coined by the Belgian anthropologist van Gennep (1960). Liminality refers to the intervening phase of transition in tribal rites of passage. The limen phase involves moving from a previous socio-cultural state to a new condition which has few of the attributes of the preceding state of being. Liminality has close links with flow as discursive frames of play. Both are ways of experiencing play, with flow being the means by which liminality and, by extension, transformation come to be realized. Storytelling enables participants to go through the transitional phase of making meaning through play, and ultimately

to think, act and feel as if they are something else. Winnicott describes it as "the intermediate area of experiencing" where inner reality and external reality merge (103). Liminality is the transportation into the world of the characters, it can also be considered as occupying the transformational phase in the *Njingkook* theatre experience in fact at this stage there is a relative permanent change that begins to take the conduct of the participants. The characters in the world of the stories speak to the consciousness of the participant who is caught in the world of the make-believe driven by the paradox, the participant in the line of this theatre experience begins to imitate.

Imitation

Having been transported to the world of the characters in the story, the active participant begins to recreate events by imitation, in fact, in many African cultures, for instance, children do not simply imitate roles of 'mother' and 'father', but they emulate what they have recognized with a view to recreate because of previous experiences. Within the *Mupun* communities, children imitate characters, especially the good one by way of reenactment of the stories, sometimes they share experiences of the characters to avert such a repetition. Aristotle called it "Mimesis", which is not just an act of copying or reproducing, but a potent source of transformation which is the goal of education. Hence imitation, in Aristotelian terms, is capable of reproducing, in the sense of bringing forth something that is more than the original. Through emulation as one of the transforming elements in imitation, new patterns and structures are created from previous experiences.

The playing child pretends or acts out something that has become familiar. By creating new patterns based on emulation, children will transfer the same patterns to other contexts. In the process, they are socialized into the adult world in a more

meaningful way. Thus, children develop their perceptions, values and identities through emulating others or things in their world. Imitation also leads to new knowledge through the function of recognition. For instance, putting on a costume is a form of disguise which requires the recognition not of the costume itself, but of something else beyond the costume. The costume may make the pleasant appear unpleasant, or the ugly appear beautiful, but the idea lies in knowing what it is that should be recognized in the imitation. Imitation is not merely a second version, but a recognition in the sense that something else has been revealed. At the level of imitation, participants begin to witness a strong desire to re-create and take a change in character.

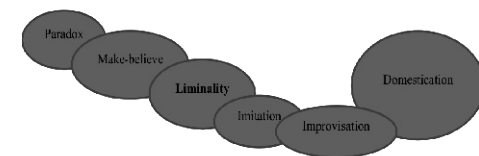
Improvisation

As participants imitate, they advance to additional creativity by improvising. This marks the stage of additional creativity and value addition on the part of the participant who does not only try to imitate but adds to the existing body of knowledge. By observation, participants of the *Njingkook* try to recreate or narrate stories with a creative approach thereby adding value to the existing body of knowledge. This is a psychomotor phase where knowledge acquired is applied. The nature of improvisation as a discursive play frame may be observed in its role as a form of reflection-in-action, taking spontaneous actions that incorporate new items that allows for dynamic patterns in telling stories “A formal dialogue of past and present” (Hutcheon25). Never settles but always renews itself, this self-renewing quality appears to be a consequence of the spontaneity that enables the play to sustain itself. Through improvisation different versions of stories emerge as a result of selection and dis-selection. The degree of creativity is measured in the ability of the performer to capture the codes of the moment. The researcher observed that when two performers perform the same story, their rendition is never the same at this point, the spectator adds value to

the existing body of knowledge. The improvisation stage comes at the end of the performance when the spectator understands and begins to share the same values in different narrative patterns.

Domestication

What is learning if the character and personality of the student will not be affected? At what point do we measure how much is learned? Ultimately, the aim of every story is to pass a message to the audience who collectively are expected to witness a relative permanent change in self and community. Hence the point of doing the lessons in the performance becomes domestication. Domestication therefore sees man as a story-telling animal. That means I can only answer the question 'what am I to do' if I can answer the question of what story or stories, I find myself a part of. *Njingkook* theatre creates a construct communal alternative to existential reality and educate the community by preserving existing cultural values and tradition that will enhance a peaceful and a progressive community. Education here is local, because the mandate is to develop the human resource that will further enhance the development of the community and the sustenance of its value system, hence, while the performance tapped from the peoples cultural resources, the stage we refer to as the domestication is when the spectators now becomes what the society expected them to be, good farmers, warriors, husbands, wives, religious (doing good) and also producing children in that pattern. At the level of domestication, participants have already developed skills for adaptation and eventual change. They will accept their situation without much critical reflection. They may gradually become integrated into the dominant system under the rhetoric of local participation which takes this process:



The above model suggests the process that one undergoes as part of the learning process in Njingkook theatre. It also summarizes the taxonomy of active participation within the framework of learning in the Mupun Njingkook theatre.

To this end, appreciating the process of learning in the Mupun Njingkook tradition experience is anchored on an all-round development, which includes the ability to engage in productive enterprise like community farming (*Wuuk*), community hunting (*gwat*) and internalization of roles through constant imitation and mentoring. The Njingkook theatre therefore preserves the morals, philosophy, epistemology and aesthetics of the community, usually coded and transmitted orally from generation to generation. Through the theatre, history is also preserved, collective struggle is encouraged, and a people's belief is preached and passed to the young. This is what the researcher would like to refer to as folk **theatre –in –Education**. Modern education policies in Nigeria have failed to recognize the traditional knowledge system and a whole civilization is at the threshold of going extinct in this regard. A reassessment of traditional performance forms should be documented as a part of the education curriculum of local communities especially at the early primary school level.

Conclusion

The paper chronicled the discursive frames within a folk theatre in education, Using the Mupun Njingkook theatre experience. The paper Identifies paradox, make-believe, liminal, imitation, improvisation and domestication as the discursive frames for teaching and learning within the space of entertainment and education which occurs in the Njingkook theatre experience. The performer who tells stories orally, stands as the community teacher and scholar, he/ she takes the medium of his art to transmit and sustain the value system, philosophy and educating the

community. However, contemporary education system have failed to recognized the place of folk education especially with the theatre and traditional performance and play system, with the fast adopted western approach, educational policies in Nigeria seems to negate this age long tradition hence, many graduates can boast to understand the entire western world but many will fail in the understanding of their immediate African community or Value system.

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